

## Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1182

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNAV COMMSTA LONDONDERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 052

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: STRAIGHT TALK FROM SECSTATE REES

1. SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND MERLYN REES AND PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE DON CONCANNON IN SEPARATE SPEECHES JANUARY 30 OUTLINED EXPECTATIONS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION PHASE TWO AND HINTED AT CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE. SPEAKING AT BELFAST JUNIOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REES SAID NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICIANS, HMG, PARLIAMENT AND PEOPLE OF UK WANTED INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNMENT REESTABLISHED IN PROVINCE. STABLE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT MUST BE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH COMMUNITIES, HE SAID. AFTER REPEATING ASSURANCES THAT BRITAIN WOULD NOT PULL OUT OF NORTHERN IRELAND HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR AGREEMENT RESTED WITH LOCAL POLITICIANS AND URGED THEM TO SHOW ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP TO OVERCOME LONG-STANDING DIFFERENCES. HE WARNED THAT "BRITISH DIMENSION" OF FIFTY FOUR MILLION CITIZENS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AT WESTMINSTER WOULD BITTERLY REGRET AND RESENT ANY APPEARANCE OF INTRANSIGENCE. CONCANNON IN SPEECH AT COOKSTOWN SAID PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND WANT CONSTITUTIONAL SOLUTION AND ARE NOT MERELY ASKING POLITICIANS TO SCORE

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POINTS OR VICTORIES. THE STAKES ARE TOO HIGH FOR THAT,

HE SAID. ACCORDING TO CONCANNON ONLY WITH A LOCAL ADMINISTRATION TO REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE WOULD NORTHERN IRELAND HAVE THE RESPECT AND SUPPORT NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN ITS EXISTENCE. IAN PAISLEY REACTED WITH WARNING THAT UUUC (UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COALITION) WOULD NOT BE PUSHED AROUND EITHER BY WESTMINSTER POLITICIANS OR REPUBLICANS. REG EMPEY DEPUTY LEADER OF NEW ULSTER UNITED UNIONIST MOVEMENT WARNED THAT "BADGERING" THE UUUC WOULD SNUFF OUT ANY REMAINING HOPE OF REACHING AGREEMENT.

2. FIRST RECONVENED CONVENTION MEETING FEBRUARY 3 IS EXPECTED TO BE SHORT AND FORMAL AND TO ADJOURN FOR PRIVATE INTER-PARTY TALKS. UUUC LEADER HARRY WEST WILL MOVE TO ADJOURN AND MOTION WILL BE SECONDED BY GERRY FITT OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY (SDLP). BUSINESS COMMITTEE AT MEETING JAN 30 ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY REVISED UUUC MOTION PROPOSED BY UUC CHIEF WHIP AUSTIN ARDILL AND SECONDED BY SDLP'S JOHN HUME. MOTION READ: "THAT THE CONVENTION WELCOMES THE INITIATIVE ALREADY SHOWN BY THE CHAIRMAN IN CONDUCTING DISCUSSIONS WITH CONVENTION PARTIES AND CONSCIOUS THAT THE CHAIRMAN IS THEREBY WELL AWARE OF PARTY OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES, REQUESTS HIM TO SEEK TO ARRANGE FORMAL INTER-PARTY TALKS UNDER HIS CHAIRMANSHIP." THESE "PARTY OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES" INCLUDE OF COURSE UUUC REFUSAL TO DISCUSS POWER-SHARING AT CABINET LEVEL WITH SDLP "REPUBLICANS" AND SDLP UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT LESS THAN CABINET LEVEL RESPONSIBILITIES.

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